



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

shop, in a country town." Allow me to tell you that this is not the fact.

We have again to express our gratification at the very dispassionate and candid manner in which our correspondent writes, creditable alike to himself, and to our paper, which serves as a vehicle for such letters.

We have shown our own readiness to correct an error. Our correspondent will also bear with us while we keep our argument to the point.

We have not complained of the Church of Rome for taking due care that the sacrament of Christ should be celebrated according to Christ's own institution—that is, with real bread and wine. We never objected to any care that can be taken for securing this. On the contrary, our great objection to the Church of Rome is where she presumes to change what Christ appointed, as when she denies to almost all communicants that cup of which Christ said—"Drink ye all of it."

The point in question is this—when a Roman Catholic attends a mass, and bows down and worships the bread and wine, taking that bread and wine to be CHRIST HIMSELF, can he be sure (even supposing transubstantiation to be possible at all) that it has really taken place at that mass?

If he cannot be infallibly certain of it, there must be something wrong in the doctrine of the Church of Rome; for it is not credible that God should require us to worship something as God, without giving us the means of knowing certainly whether the thing which we worship is really God or not.

We pointed to the rubric of the mass, which expressly says, that if the wine be made "of grapes not ripe, the sacrament is not made." In that case the people are clearly worshipping mere bread and wine, and if they have no certainty that the grapes were ripe, their worship cannot be an act of faith, even if transubstantiation be true.

Our correspondent does not tell us how the people can be certain that the grapes were ripe. He only says that the meaning of it is that wine is to be used, and not vinegar; but that is not the meaning of the words "made of ripe grapes." There are other words expressing that the wine is not to be used after being turned into vinegar; but these words which we quoted and argued from, say that the wine must be made of ripe grapes. Our correspondent argues as if all wine made from grapes not fully ripe (*maturis*) would be vinegar and not wine. This is not the case. A few green grapes may spoil the flavour of a cask of wine, but do not turn it into vinegar, or make it cease to be wine. If our correspondent were to travel in the north of France or Switzerland, and taste the wine at the roadside inns, he would find abundant proof that wine may be made from unripe grapes and yet be wine still, and not vinegar.* And the rubric of the mass says that if such wine be used the sacrament is not made, and then, of course, the people are worshipping nothing but mere bread and wine, and that with the worship which is due to the true God!

And now, again, we ask our correspondent, when he goes to any mass, what certainty has he that the wine then in the cup was really made of ripe grapes? If he can have no certainty of this, how can he be certain that transubstantiation has taken place? How he can be certain that the bread and wine at that mass has really been turned into the body and blood of Christ? and if he be not certain of this, how can he fall down and worship it?

But we put another question to him also. The wine must be made *de vite*, of the vine. Now, it is notorious that a large proportion of what is sold in this country as wine was never made *de vite*, of the vine, and the imitation is often so perfect that a good judge of wine may be deceived by it; perhaps not one priest in twenty would be capable of detecting the difference. Our correspondent must admit that if such wine did get into the cup, no sacrament would be made, there would be no transubstantiation, nothing to worship but mere bread and wine. When our correspondent goes to mass what certainty has he that such wine has not got into the cup? If he can have no certainty about this, what certainty can he have that the bread and wine is really turned into the body and blood of the Lord? What certainty can he have that he is worshipping Christ, and not mere bread and wine.

We asked him this question, too, as well as about the ripe grapes; and now we beg to point out to him that he has not said one word in answer to this. We ask him to seek for truth with courage equal to his moderation and candour, and to try what answer he can give to this.

We will then be willing, if he wish to pursue the search for truth, to examine the doubts that must arise from the doctrine of the Church of Rome about "the intention of the priest."

* That wine may be, and is often made from unripe grapes, even in England, might be proved by many authorities; let the following extract suffice, from "Accums Art of Making Wine from Native Fruits," London, 1830. Page 70—"As no real flavour is communicated by the husk, or even by the stems of the grape, this fruit may be safely taken in any stage of ripeness in which it can be most conveniently obtained. Unripe grapes may be obtained where the vine is largely cultivated, from the thinning usually practised on the branches in this country, where the vines are under cover. Dr. Macculloch recommends to wait till the grapes show a tendency to ripen, or till the advance of the cold season shows that no further change can be expected."

ON INFALLIBILITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—I beg to tender you my best thanks for your kind consideration in giving a place in your journal to my simple letter on the infallibility of the Church of Christ. May I request a continuance of your indulgence, whilst I bring forward a small portion of what remains "behind" on that interesting and all-important subject.

First, allow me to correct a mistake into which you fell, by supposing that the initials "P.B.," with which I marked the major part of my scriptural quotations, meant Protestant Bible. Now, they meant no such thing; it was "pure Bible" for which they stood. I am glad you say that the quotations thus marked are not from the authorised version.

I will begin by giving a passage from the Acts of the Apostles, which alone would be sufficient to establish the infallibility of the Church—viz., "For it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no farther burden upon you than these necessary things."—Acts xv., 28, P.B. The holy councils of the Church, lawfully kept for determination or clearing of doubts, or condemning of errors and heresies, or appeasing of schism and troubles, or reformation of life, and such like important matters, have ever the assistance of God's Spirit, and, therefore, cannot err in their sentences and determinations concerning the same, because the Holy Ghost cannot err, from whom (as you see here), jointly with the council, the resolution proceeds. We learn, also, that in the councils, especially (though otherwise and in other tribunals of the Church, it be also verified), Christ's promise is fulfilled, that the Holy Ghost should suggest to them, and teach them all truth, and that not in the Apostles' time only, but to the world's end. For so long shall councils, the Church, and her pastors, have this privilege of God's assistance, as there are either doubts to resolve, heretics to condemn, truths to be opened, evil men to be reformed, or schisms to be appeased.

"But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me; and you also shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning."—John xv., 26, 27, P.B. "We learn by this passage that our Lord vouchsafes to join together the testimony of the Holy Ghost and of the Apostles; that we may see the testimony of truth jointly to consist in the Holy Ghost and in the prelates of the Church. "But when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will teach you all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but what tidings soever he shall hear he shall speak; and the things that are to come he shall show you."—John xvi., 13. Ever note that the Holy Ghost in that he is promised to the Church, is called the Spirit of Truth, which Holy Spirit, for many other causes, is given to divers private men, and to all good men to sanctification; but to teach all truth, and preserve in truth, and from error, He is promised only to the Church, and chief governor, and general councils thereof; and this spirit is contrary to the spirit of error, heresy, and falsehood. Therefore, the Church is infallible, and, consequently, cannot fall into apostasy. "For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."—Matt. x., 20, P.B. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, said the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. Arise! shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—Is. lix., 21, and lx., 1, 2, 3, Protestant Bible. These are passages, sir, every word of which sets forth, with perfect lucidity, the infallibility of our Lord's Church; and the whole is a plain and positive prediction that that infallibility was to be perpetual, and last to the end of the world. "He said, therefore, to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you; receive ye the Holy Ghost."—John xx., 21, 22. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me."—Luke x., 16, P.B. Therefore, the Church is infallible; because to hear the bishops and prelates of Christ's Church, is to hear Christ himself; and to despise them, is to despise him.

"Remember your prelates, who have spoken the word of God to you; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."—Heb. xiii. 7. We are here warned to give great regard, in our belief, to the holy fathers, doctors, and glorious bishops gone before us in God's Church; not doubting but they, being our lawful pastors, had and taught the truth; of whom St. Augustine says—"That which they found in the Church, they held fast; that which they learned, they taught; that which they received of their Fathers, the same they delivered to their children." The faith and teaching, then, of the prelates of Christ's Church, who are the legitimate successors of the Apostles, must indisputably be infallible; otherwise the Holy Scriptures would never command us to hear them, and to follow their faith. Again—"Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief. For this is

not expedient for you."—Ibid., v. 17. "There is nothing more inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, than obedience of the lay people to the priests and prelates of God's Church in matters of faith, conscience, and religion. Whereof the Apostle giveth this reason, because they have the charge of men's souls, and must answer for them; which is an infinite pre-eminence and superiority, joined with burden, and requires marvellous submission and most obedient subjection from all that are under them and their government." It follows, of course, that their teaching is infallible. In the name of goodness, if they were fallible, would we be commanded to obey and be subject to them? "Sanctify them in truth," says our Lord.—John xvii., 17. "Christ prayeth that the Apostles, their successors, and all that shall be of their belief, may be sanctified in truth. Which is to desire that the Church may ever have the Spirit of Truth, and be free from error. Which prayer of Christ had not been heard if the Church might err." If anything, said God, be hard and doubtful, thou shalt come to the priest of the Levitical race, and thou shalt follow their sentence. The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and the law thou shalt require of his mouth. Ask the law of the priest. See Deut. xvii., 8, &c. Much more must we refer all to our bishops and pastors whom God has placed in the government of his Church, with much larger privilege than ever he did the old priests over the synagogue.

"For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourished and cherished it, as also Christ did the Church."—Eph. v., 29. "It is an unspeakable dignity of the Church, which the Apostle expresseth often elsewhere, but especially in this whole passage, to be that creature only for which Christ effectually suffered; to be washed and embued with water and blood issuing out of his holy side; to be nourished with his own body; to be his members; to be so joined unto him as the body and members of the same flesh and substance to the head; to be loved and cherished by him, as wife by husband; yes, to be his own most dear spouse, taken and formed out of his own side on the cross, as Eve, our first father Adam's spouse was made of his rib. This incomparable excellency of the Church, so beloved by Christ, and so inseparably joined in marriage with him, proves to every man of common sense, that she is infallible—that is to say, can never err, can never be divorced from her dear Spouse for idolatry, heresy, or other abominations." This Church, sir, is the pillar of truth, the establishment of all truth; therefore, it cannot err. It has the Spirit of God to lead it into all truth, unto the world's end; therefore it cannot err. It is built upon a rock, hell-gates shall not prevail against it; therefore, it cannot err. Christ is in it till the end of the world; he has placed in it Apostles, doctors, pastors, and rulers, to the consummation and full perfection of the whole body, that in the meantime we be not carried about with every blast of doctrine; therefore it cannot err. He has prayed for it, that it be sanctified in truth, that the faith of the chief governor thereof fail not; it is his spouse, his body, his lot, kingdom, and inheritance, given him in this world. He loveth it as his own flesh, and it cannot be divorced or separated from him; therefore, it cannot err. The New Testament Scriptures, sacraments, and sacrifice cannot be changed, being the everlasting dowry of the Church, continued and never rightly made use of in any other Church but this, our Catholic Church; therefore, it cannot err. Lactantius says—"It is the Catholic Church only that keepeth the true faith and worship of God; this is the fountain of truth; this the house of God; this the temple of faith; whither if any man enter not, or from which if any man go out, he is a stranger and a stranger from the hope of everlasting life and salvation." St. Cyprian says—"That the Church never departeth from that which she once hath known." St. Irenaeus says, that—"The Apostles have laid up in the Church, as in a rich treasury, all truth." And that "she keepeth, with most sincere diligence, the Apostles' faith and preaching." It would be endless to recite all that the holy Fathers say of infallibility; all counting it a superlative, and most vicious, pernicious absurdity to affirm that the Church of Christ may err in faith and religion. Our Lord says to his Church—"How beautiful art thou, my love, how beautiful art thou. Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee. Thy lips, my spouse, are as a dropping honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments as the smell of frankincense. Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, and comely." "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array? Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning upon her beloved."—Canticles. Yes, the Church has Christ for her support, and leans upon his infallible promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. After all these passages I have given from Holy Writ, which indubitably prove the infallibility of the Church of Christ, you cannot longer, without confusion, maintain that she is fallible. I defy you to show me one passage, one text, one word in the Sacred Volume which justifies the belief that the Church may err in matters of faith. I asserted that if the Church was fallible (that is, liable to err—to teach erroneous, antichristian, idolatrous doctrines), Christ could not love her. If that approaches blasphemy, I assert, reassert, iterate, and reiterate it. If

she taught, or were capable of teaching such doctrines, she would cease to be the beloved spouse of Christ, and would be full of spots and wrinkles.

May I trespass on your space and courtesy a little more, for the purpose of answering your and Bedale's objections to infallibility. You assert, that "if the Church be perfect, she must always have a perfect head." To show, then, that she always had not a perfect head, you point to the immoralities of Alexander VI. But what do that Pope's moral imperfections make against the perfection and infallibility of the Church's teaching? I fearlessly answer that they make nothing. His criminal conduct only proves that Popes are subject to human frailties in common with the rest of mankind; and that no power or authority affords sufficient security against the corruption of human nature and the influence of the passions. St. Peter denied our Lord: but did his weakness prejudice the other Apostles? No. Neither do the crimes, moral or other, of individual Popes prejudice the perfection of the Church. Our Lord foresaw the shortcomings of some of them; what he says of the Pharisees and Jewish doctors may be said of them—"Saying, the Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not, for they say and do not."—Matt. xxiii., 2, 3. P. B. St. Augustine, on this verse, says—"Did our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Pharisees, find any prayer to the chair wherein they sat? Did he not commend that chair of Moses, and, preserving the honour of the chair, reprove them? For he saith—They sit upon the chair of Moses, that which they say do ye." Neither for the Pharisees did our Lord command the chair of Moses to be forsaken, in which verily he figured his own, for he commanded the people to do that which they say, and not to do that which they do, and that the holiness of the chair be in no case forsaken, nor the unity of the flock divided, on account of the naughty pastors."

Although, in their capacity as men, the Popes have many times exhibited proofs of their weakness and corruption, yet, as heads of the Church, and in connection with the universal Church, they have, during these eighteen hundred years, taught one and the same Catholic doctrine. Liborius, of whom you spoke so much in your last number, in persecution, might yield; Marcellinus, through fear, might commit idolatry; Honorius might fall to heresy; and, more than this, some Judas might creep into the office; and yet, all without prejudice to the infallibility and perfection of the Church, or even to the office and seat, "in which," says St. Augustine, "our Lord hath set the doctrine of truth." So your first objection to infallibility, on being touched, ascends in subtle vapour.

I asserted that every work of God is perfect. You denied it, and fled like lightning, leaving your shadow behind, to the tomb of our primogenitor, whom you exhumed and planted against me, to sustain your blasphemous denial. But permit me to tell you that you gained nothing for your far-fetched argument, because Adam, in leaving the Garden of Eden, was as perfect a man in shape, form, and manly beauty as when he was created. His fall, then, did not deprive him of perfection. "Bedale" says, in your last number, that the works of God are not absolutely perfect. I beg to refer him and you, Mr. Editor, to the books of Job, Ecclesiastes, Psalms, and Ezekiel, where you will see that the works of God are declared to be perfect. I also beg leave to refer ye to the eighth verse of the sixth chapter of the Canticles, where your Lord says that his Church is perfect—"One is my dove, my perfect one is but one." If, after this, you persist in asserting that the Church of Christ is fallible, imperfect, I must only have a feeling of pity for your incredulity. God, also, calls his Church eminent. "Thus," saith the Lord God, "I myself will take of the marrow of the high cedar, and will set it. I will crop off a tender twig from the top of the branches thereof, and I will plant it on a mountain high and eminent."—Ezek. xvii., 22. P. B. What, I ask you, do all these titles—high, eminent, glorious, holy, spotless, beloved, fair, comely, beautiful, bright, perfect, &c.—which our Lord confers on the Church prove? I fearlessly maintain that they prove infallibility; and I may safely advance, and assert, without fear of being refuted, that none, not even one of these characteristic epithets could, justly, be applied to the Church, if she was fallible—that is, liable to lead the flock committed to her pastoral care from the rich, old pastures into new and sterile ones. I said that—"Without an infallible tribunal unity in faith is a thing impossible, and that unity is found, by experience, to exist nowhere but in the Roman Catholic Church." "Oh," you replied, "the Quakers are united." I emphatically deny it. Because each one, in that and every other sect, is allowed to interpret Scripture according to his private fancy; and will any rational man say that such unscripural liberty is calculated to produce perfect unity? No; it is an absolute impossibility that anything but "individual unity" (hardly that) could be attained by such means. For instance, it is not long ago that two Protestants, of this town, had a very tart, acrimonious discussion on capital points of belief; one maintaining that such and such were the Scriptural doctrines, and the other as stoutly and as fearlessly maintaining that they were not.

"So high at last the contest rose,
From words, they almost came to blows."

And what threw your correspondent and the by-standers into almost breathless, convulsive laughter, was the fact

that, a few moments before, when arguing against a Roman Catholic, these unpacific dialecticians declared that their thoughts and principles about religion and its mysteries were "exactly" alike. Such is the unity that exists in the sects of the Christian world. "Light is only required to make their differences appear." That is what you call the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Individual unity. This is very far from being the unity of the Spirit of Truth and concord, which resides in, and distinguishes the Church of Christ—the holy Catholic Church. We read of spirits of discord. I wish you joy of their agreement. Perfect, collective unity, I repeat, is nowhere found to exist but in the one Church. Our Lord, to secure this unity, has furnished his Church with an infallible guide, which will preserve it until time shall be no more. You assert that our Lord has given this guide no credentials; and you add, if you found in your Bible such a text as this—"Receive the Bishop of Rome as the interpreter of my will," you would believe in the infallibility of the Church over which he presides. But what is your "receive" to these texts of the Holy Bible—"Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."—Matt. xvi., 18, 19. "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren."—Luke xxii., 32. "And the names of the twelve Apostles are these—The first Simon, who is called Peter," &c.—Matt. x., 2. "Simon son of John, feed my lambs—Simon, son of John, feed my sheep."—John xxi. These are a few extracts from the credentials which our Lord has given to the Bishop of Rome and to the Church, of which he is the head, to which your "receive," &c., is not worthy to be compared. St. Bernard says—"Why did our Lord shed his blood? Truly to redeem those sheep, the care of which he committed both to Peter and also to his successors, the Bishops of Rome."

You will never be able with all your fine arguments, to disprove the infallibility of the Church of Christ, because the odds are too much against you. On one side there is the testimony of Scripture, tradition, the Fathers, and reason; against which are "set in array" only tinsel arguments, which are the glare of false philosophy and the offspring of sophistry.

I now "come to the bower," or wood, in which you placed a blind man, and I sat down to laugh at the facility and apparent perversity with which you got him from thence to the town without a guide; thereby endeavouring to prove the existence of a conductor to be entirely unnecessary. You forgot, in the meantime, to inform your readers that there was a learned Ethiopian, whose sight was unimpaired, in that very wood, and being asked could he find his way out, replied—"How can I unless I am guided." The Bereans, too, were in this wood, endeavouring to find the true way, but could not until two authorised guides pointed out to them the right path, in which they walked, and found it led to the town. It is written in universal characters in that wood, that the true paths thereof are so difficult to be found, from which the volatile and those void of knowledge deviating, are led to destruction; thereby implying, unmistakably, the absolute necessity which exists for a guide.

It is also written in the wood, that the private pathfinder can never arrive at the true path, because he does not put himself in communication with the makers thereof.

If, as some of your corps say, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Austin, and many other ancient luminaries, went astray in that wood, how is it possible, I ask, that your "fear coach" could get to the town so easily as you say? I say that he could never get there, but would be tossed to and fro, torn, and eventually destroyed by his own pride and presumption in trusting his unstable judgment in opposition to the guides appointed to conduct him safely to the town. That is my answer to your nemorous parable.

"Bedale" refers me to the Apocalyptic Churches, and particularly to the Church of Ephesus, for the purpose of showing that infallibility of teaching depended on conditions. Now, if he had read carefully the second chapter of the Apocalypse, from the first to the seventh verse, he would see that that particular branch of "Christ's Church," though fallen in charity, still preserved the true faith, and hated the deeds of the heretical Nicolaetes, which our Lord says he also hated. He also refers me to the promises made to Moses and Aaron, notwithstanding which the latter fell into idolatry. But he signally failed to establish a parallel case between Aaron and the Church of Christ, to which our Lord promised the Spirit of Truth to remain with her for ever; and that the words which he had put in her mouth should not depart out of her mouth for ever. These promises were never given to Moses, Aaron, nor the old priesthood; consequently, if they fell, it would be superlatively preposterous to infer that the Church might fall. "Bedale" asserts that God's promises are conditional. I answer, that if this objection had any force, it would prove a great deal more than "Bedale" designs. For if the promises of Christ, which were addressed immediately to his Apostles, be only conditional, it follows that the Apostles had not an absolute promise of being always assisted by the Holy Ghost; which, in effect, would undermine all they either taught or wrote—that is, the whole New Testament.

He also says—"What can the Church of Rome plead more than Israel and Judah that infallibility should be

hers?" I answer this question with St. Paul (Heb. viii., 6), that Christ "is the mediator of a better covenant, which is established upon better promises." It is very certain that the synagogue was never styled "the pillar and ground of truth;" nor had she a Divine assurance that "the gates of hell should never prevail against her." On the contrary, her fall in rejecting the Messiah was positively foretold by the prophets; as that he should be a "stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel," &c.—Isaiah. viii., 14. So that if the synagogue had ever any promise of infallibility, it was not to be perpetual. But of Christ's Church, the royal Psalmist says—"They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations."

"Bedale" with all his might endeavours to draw a parallel between Aaron and the Church of Rome, saying—"The people were weary of waiting upon God according to his own words, and desired something more tangible and exciting, and induced him, who should have restrained them, to join in their sin. Just so with the Church of Rome. The Scriptures were a sufficient guide, but the people liked not the spirituality of the simple faith; they required something more externally attractive, and their guides, seeing this disposition, did as Aaron had done, forget God, and reared up a golden idol in his place." Now, this is the grossest calumny I have yet seen. I publicly defy "Bedale" to bring forward the least proof to sustain his charge!!! He cannot, surely, be so unreasonable as to think that your readers will believe his mere, unsupported assertion. I challenge him to show me where or when the Church of Rome reared up the golden idol like Aaron. Did "just so!" It must be thinking about "Jim Crow" he was when penning that sentence. It is plain to be seen that he is on the wrong side when he could not answer my arguments without having recourse to calumny of the basest description.

The Church of Rome, sir, which is the one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose faith is spoken of in the whole world, and her obedience published everywhere (St. Paul), did never and will never rear up "Bedale's" golden idol, but will ever be subject (Eph. v. 24) to her Divine founder, ever loved by him (v. 25), ever glorious, holy, and without blemish.—(v. 27.) She will be, until the termination of ages, as beautiful as the Aurora, as luminous as the noon-day sun, and as fair as the moon.

I am, Mr. Editor, your very humble servant,
Passage of Waterford. WILLIAM ROURKE.

P.S.—Were it not that I have already unparadoxically trespassed on your space, I would undertake to answer the questions of Mr. O'Mara (who is, I may say, a cohabitant of mine), which appeared in your last. I will do so, however, on a future occasion.

In printing the above letter from Mr. Rourke, we must confess ourselves rather disappointed. From the ability and clearness displayed in his previous letter, we had expected, on the present occasion, some brief and cogent arguments in defence of the infallibility claimed by the Church of Rome. In his present declamatory and lengthy epistle, confident assertion and re-assertion, iteration and re-iteration, stand in the place of proof; and the small quantity of argument really contained in it, seems, to our plain understanding, well nigh lost in a misty cloud of words. Perhaps, however, Mr. Rourke is hardly to be blamed, if, having expended all his good arguments in his former letter, he had nothing better left than some long extracts from his common-place book.

We shall make no excuse for having supposed that Mr. Rourke used the letters "P. B.," in the same way as other writers of his Church. If Mr. Rourke deals in riddles, we do not; and we opine, that few of our readers, Roman Catholics or Protestants, would have guessed, unless Mr. Rourke had himself enlightened them, that the initials "P. B." were not meant to designate the Protestant Bible, but the Roman Catholic Douay version. We pass by the sneer with which Mr. Rourke terminates the passage, correcting and enlightening us in this particular. To follow Mr. Rourke through all the mazes of his dictatorial, rather than argumentative epistle, would far exceed the limits of our pages; but we think we need look for no better illustration of the manner in which some controversialists are wont to build an immense fabric upon a very small and insufficient Scriptural foundation than one or two of the examples with which the foregoing letter supplies us. Let us take, for instance, his first extract out of the 15th chapter of the Acts. It would, of course, be impossible to know the meaning of any passage of Scripture without referring to the passage, and looking at the context in which it stands. Our readers, then, on referring to the chapter of the Acts just mentioned, will find that the facts narrated in it are as follows:—Certain Jewish converts had come down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and informed the Christians of that city that they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. The people of Antioch, desirous to know whether this was really the case, sent up a deputation to the Church at Jerusalem to ask for their decision upon what was then a very important question. The apostles and elders met together at Jerusalem, and decided that the observance of the law of Moses, was not made obligatory upon Gentile converts, either by the authority of the Holy Ghost or by the power which our Lord had left to his apostles to make regulations for the government of his Church. This is the plain meaning of the passage quoted by Mr. Rourke; and

we now request our readers to turn back to his letter and see what a structure he has built upon this narrow foundation. Let them compare the two lines of what the Bible actually does say, with the seventeen lines which, according to Mr. Rourke, it ought to have said. For, undoubtedly if councils in every age were as certain of infallible guidance as the apostles were, it would have been but reasonable to expect to find in Scripture some such declaration and assurance of their infallibility as Mr. Rourke professes to have found in this 15th chapter of the Acts—with how much or how little reason our readers can now judge for themselves.

The next passage quoted by Mr. Rourke is an equally convincing illustration of his power of seeing deeper into the meaning of Scripture than his more matter-of-fact neighbours. Our readers will have the goodness to refer to the extracts from the 15th and 16th chapters of St. John's Gospel, which commence Mr. Rourke's fourth paragraph—"But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send unto you from the Father—the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father—he shall give testimony of me; and you, also, shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning." "But when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will teach you all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but what tidings soever he shall hear, he shall speak, and the things that are to come he shall show you."

Now, listen to the meaning which Mr. Rourke has extracted out of these simple words. "To teach all truth, and preserve in truth, and from error, he is promised only to the Church, and chief governor (!) and general councils (!) thereof; and this spirit is contrary to the spirit of error, heresy, and falsehood; therefore (!!!) the Church is infallible." If St. John had really intended, in the above passages, to give an assurance of the infallibility of the "chief governor," and "general councils" of the Church, we humbly venture to think he would have used a little plainer language, and not left us to the somewhat precarious guidance of Mr. Rourke's logical skill, in such an (if true) all-important matter.

We proceed to Mr. Rourke's next proof of infallibility, which he finds in Hebrews xiii. 7—"Remember your prelates, who have spoken the word of God to you; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Mr. Rourke here appears to maintain that it is the duty of Christian people, in all cases, as another of our correspondents (Philaethes) roundly asserts, when he calls it "an injunction without qualification, or limitation of place or time," to obey their prelates. If so, there can be but little doubt what the duty of the people of Ireland was at the period of the Reformation. At that time the great majority of the prelates embraced the reformed faith, and their successors, the Protestant bishops, are now, unquestionably, the prelates whom the Roman Catholics of the present day ought to obey. "No, certainly not," says Mr. Rourke. And why? we may beg leave to ask him. "Because," he would reply, "the Protestant prelates are not in communion with the See of Rome." But then, we may venture to suggest, does St. Paul say a single word about the See of Rome in the passage quoted above? And yet some such reference to the See of Rome is absolutely necessary, to enable Mr. Rourke to defend the position which he has taken up.

In charity to our readers, we must excuse ourselves from going over texts and arguments which have already been sufficiently discussed in our paper before, merely referring them to some of the pages where our articles are to be found.† They have had a sample of Mr. Rourke's power of finding new meanings in what appears to ordinary persons to be plain and simple passages of Scripture; and we could have found it quite as easy to adduce specimens of these far-fetched, if not impossible, interpretations in those parts of his letter on which we forbear to comment. We had asked, for instance, that he should produce any one single text which attributes an infallible authority to the Bishop of Rome; and he thinks that he has satisfactorily done this by citing one or two passages which speak of the precedence of the Apostle Peter—e. g., Matt. x. 2—"And the names of the twelve apostles are these, the first Simon, who is called Peter."

As to Mr. Rourke's other speculative arguments about the perfection of the Church, we can but repeat our former assertion, that there is not a text which appears to prove that the Church must possess perfect purity of doctrinal teaching, which would not also prove, by similar reasoning, that it should possess perfect purity of life and conduct. Mr. Rourke admits that the Church of Rome often possessed a very faulty head—as, for instance, Alexander VI.—but denies, at the same time, that it taught any faulty doctrine. We believe that the only ground for this distinction was this, that the one fact was too stubborn to be dealt with, whereas the other might be plausibly denied by a dexterous controversialist. And here, not to weary our readers, and exceed our space, we take our leave of Mr. Rourke for the present.

FLOWERS FOR MARCH.

MARCH, with its many weathers, has, for once, come in like a lamb; it is to be hoped it may not go out like a lion. A few weeks have made a wondrous change in the length of the day and the face of nature. The feathered tribes have nigh recovered their mirthsome voices, and the air is glad with their song. As we go abroad, the honey-

suckle meets us with its winding sprays, the chesnut tree is bursting its winter shield, and the wild flowers of the wood and field are around our feet.

The foremost among the wild flowers of the spring is the PRIMROSE (*primula vulgaris*), called the prime (first) rose of spring, from the early flowering in the field of this

"Offspring of a dark and sullen sire,
Whose modest form so delicately fine
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled on the winds."

The pale-eyed, peering, little primrose loves to dwell in woods, hedge-banks, and pastures, and to hide its beauties under the bramble shade. It has many varieties; white, lilac, crimson, double and single, all beautiful exceedingly. The cowslip, also, was ranked, by Linnaeus, as belonging to the primrose family. Their lovely sister, the evening primrose, appears much later in the season. It is called the evening star of flowers, from its peculiarity of expanding after the vesper hour.

"In this glimmering earth-born star we read
The hope that, as its beauteous bloom
Expands to glad the close of day;
So, through the shadows of the tomb,
Shall breathe forth mercy's ray."

David had a foresight of this ray of mercy in the tomb. He said, boldly, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (Psalm xxiii. 4). He is speaking of one whom he calls "the Lord, my Shepherd;" explained by our blessed Lord Jesus Christ himself, when he said, "I am the good shepherd" (John x. 14). Could we but realize that he is with the Christian pilgrim in his passage to that unknown bourne whence no traveller returns, and that his rod and his staff will be there to comfort and support him, the purgatory of the priests would have few terrors; masses for the dead, and prayers to saints and angels would never be thought of; and our people would apply themselves directly to the great High Priest, who has made one sacrifice and oblation of himself for their sins once and for ever, and now sits on the right hand of power to make intercession for them.

The primrose is generally found in company with the VIOLET (*viola odorata*). The name of the violet is said to be acquired from the strength of its perfume (*violendi*). The common violet (*viola odorata*), with its flowers of dark purple, is found in the woods and hedge-banks throughout the country. Between Killiney Hill and Bray they are abundant, and around Finglas. Another variety, the *viola hirta*, grows by the sea-side and on banks of sand, as at Portmarnock, and the coast near Dublin from Clontarf to Kilbarrick; it is also plentiful in the woods of Blarney, in the county Cork. The marsh violet (*viola palustris*) is met with in the marshy ground around Glenree, and near the Waterfall of Powerscourt. Another of its species is called *viola clandestina*, from its habit of modest seclusion, hiding itself under its green, dark leaves, or under the grass, till betrayed by its sweet odour.

We need not say that the dark, blue violet has been ever a favourite with poet, peer, and peasant. Its colour was the great object of imitation among the ancient Romans—

"Quid placet ergo?
Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno."

Its perfume gave Shakespeare an illustration of the sweet sensations produced by music—

"It comes o'er me like the scent
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour."

Another poet has sung of its modesty and meekness—

"When the spring comes with her host
Of flowers, the flower beloved the most
Shrinks from the crowd that may confound
Her heavenly odour and virgin hue.
It joys and cheers whene'er I see
Pain on earth's meek one's press,
To think the storm that rends the tree
Seethes not thy loveliness."

The mighty men shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled (Isaiah v. 15), yet the Lord forgetteth not the cry of the humble (Psalm xix. 12), but giveth grace and exalteth him (1 Peter v. 5; Matthew xviii. 4). Accordingly the Apostles exhort us to put on and be clothed with humility as with a daily garment.

Another field flower of March is the DAFFODIL (*Narcissus pseudo-Narcissus*) the asphodel of France. It is the Lent lily and daffydowndilly of the early English poets. It opens its yellow chaliced flower in the commencement of the month in the woods and meadows, and along the banks of streams; and though Mackay says, he had never seen the true daffodil in a wild state in Ireland, we believe that others have been more fortunate. The poet's Narcissus and the Jonquil, so well known for their fragrance and beauty, flower in May. They are wild flowers in England, but naturalized with us, and the poet's Narcissus now grows in the open field in the county Cork.

The daffodil is a very transitory visitor, it speedily concludes its growth, and hastens away.

The MEZEREON TREE (*daphne mezereum*) now also presents its pretty sweet-scented pink flowers, clustered round its bare stem—

"Thought leafless, well attired, and thick beset
With blushing wreaths investing every spray."

It is a native of our own isles, though only first noticed when imported from abroad. When its leaves are some time gone, it produces its scarlet berries, contrasting with the light pale green of its leaves.

Another early blossoming shrub of our gardens is the ALMOND TREE (*amygdalis communis*), which just now appears clad with a deep roseate bloom like the peach blossom.

Its flowers and perfume have caused it to be cultivated with us, though it is in this country incapable of ripening its fruits, which we know of only from the sweet and bitter almonds of Jordan and Smyrna. In Palestine, the almond tree is a conspicuous object in the spring, and its blossoms cover the face of the land. It is associated with many interesting events in Scripture history. When Jacob was separating his flocks from those of Laban, it was rods of the almond tree that he employed. Solomon introduces the almond tree in a very touching connection in Ecclesiastes xii. 1, when enforcing the exhortation—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth"—by presenting to the mind the sudden decline of human life and strength, under the emblem of "the flourishing of the almond tree," the buds of which, when full blown, and having accomplished their purpose, suddenly change from a deep rose colour to white, and then wither and fade away. "When the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home"—

"His locks were white as drifted snow,
(Or as the almond tree doth show)
When fully spread upon the leafless tree."

From much the same reason the almond tree is employed in another place (Jeremiah i. 2), to illustrate the promptitude of God's judgments, as it is there called "the hastening tree," from the suddenness with which it puts forth its blossoms, while its branches are yet bare and unclothed with foliage. So, again, in the controversy of Moses and Aaron with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, it was the blossoming of Aaron's rod of almond tree, yielding almonds, that determined his title to the priesthood. This blossoming is as good a text as ever appeared on the Romish controversy, as to the office and calling of the priesthood. It is sadly perverted in the note in the Douay Bible on Numbers xvi. 2, which says, "that the crime of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who rebelled respecting God's appointment as to the priestly office, was schism and rebellion against the authority of the Church, and pretending to the priesthood without being called to it, as is the case of all modern sectaries." The narrative itself will tell a different story to any of our friends who will read, in the Douay Version, the history of the transaction. Korah and his brethren were Levites, or ministering servants to the people in holy things, as are the pastors of the Christian Church now, set apart for the ministry of the Gospel; but not content with this, Korah and his fellows aspired to something more—to be sacrificing priests, and to fill the office of Aaron, the great type of Jesus Christ. This is exactly the position of the Romish priesthood, who, not content with the service of the tabernacle, and standing before the people to minister among them, must usurp the office of the priest (or sacrificing minister); whereas with us Christ our Passover is sacrificed.—1 Cor. v. 7. And Christ having appeared for the destruction of sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. ix. 26, Eph. v. 2), it has been done once and for ever. "For by one oblation he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14). "Nor yet that he should offer himself often as the high priest entereth into the holies every year with the blood of others."—(Heb. ix. 25.) This being so, the rebuke of Moses to Dathan would seem more fitting to the Romish priesthood than to the modern sectaries. "Is it a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath joined you to himself, that you should serve him in the service of the tabernacle, and should stand before the congregation of the people, and should minister unto him, that you should challenge to yourselves the priesthood also."—Numb. xvi. v. 9, 10.

We can scarcely close without saying a word about our national emblem the SHAMROCK (*scamray*, trefoil in Gaelic). Mackay, in his Flora Hibernica, pronounces the shamrock, which Irishmen wear on St. Patrick's Day, to be the *trifolium repens* (Dutch clover of agriculture). It flowers in summer, and is to be found in our meadows and pastures in the spring. Its leaflets are accurately disposed in triplets; and the four-leaved shamrock is so rare that an old Irish superstition attaches to the finder of it the power of magic—

"I'll seek a four-leaved shamrock
In all the fairy dells;
And if I find the charmed leaves,
Oh, how I'll weave my spells."

Everybody knows wherefore St. Patrick is supposed to have adopted the shamrock as the national emblem of Ireland—namely, that being at a loss for an illustration of the Trinity, when preaching to the heathen Irish, he turned round and his eye rested on the shamrock. St. Patrick's teaching must have been very different, indeed, from that of Archbishop Cullen, one of whose latest pastorals adds another person to the Holy Trinity. Writing of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he says—"This tender mother destined to co-operate in the great work of our redemption will listen to the cry her children send forth from this valley of tears." St. Patrick taught his hearers that the work of redemption was planned by God the Father, performed by God the Son, and applied to the hearts of the Christian by God the Holy Ghost; but here we have a fourth co-operating power. Dr. Cullen has the gift of magic if he can induce from the Scriptures that which St. Patrick could not, that the Virgin Mary in any manner whatsoever co-operated in the redemption of mankind. Those who agree with Dr. Cullen should present him with the four-leaved shamrock on each anniversary of St. Patrick's Day.

* See last number, page 26.

† See CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. II., pages 112. and 121.